



# The NUNES Report

## Nunes Introduces American-Made Energy Freedom Act

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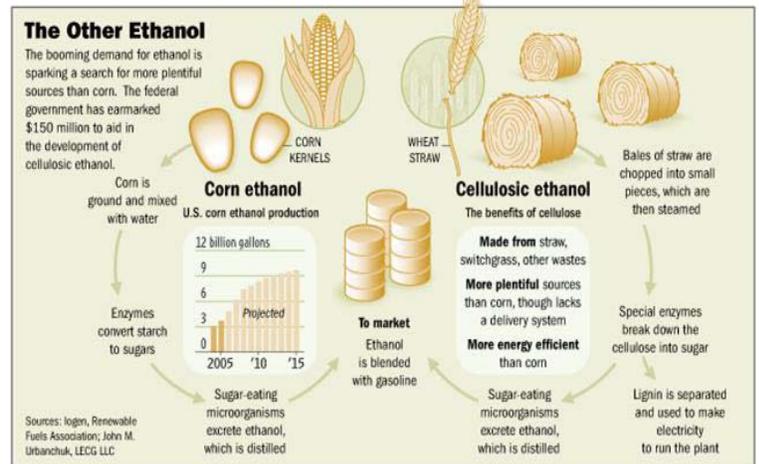
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As the House of Representatives entered its August District Work Period, the Halls of Congress echoed with the words: "We need more energy and we need it now." In the past, attempts to address our nation's energy security looked at renewables and alternatives – only to see crude oil dumped onto the international market driving down the price per barrel of oil. In these instances, basic economics took over and the cheaper energy source succeeded. Because of this, crude oil has been the fuel of choice for more than a century. This economic addiction to cheap energy has led to the crisis we are now experiencing.

Today, the United States imports 65% of its petroleum needs, and the Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that by 2025 we will import 71%. While this is a shaky situation, it is exacerbated by the fact that two-thirds of the world's known oil reserves are located in the volatile Middle East. This instability, as well as production slow downs in Nigeria and Venezuela, and a virtual halt to energy exploration in the United States have resulted in the price of oil reaching an all-time high. With this in mind, it is not a surprise that year after year



Cellulosic ethanol is the next generation ethanol and H.R. 5890 helps foster the development and production of this clean American-Made fuel.

Americans pay higher and higher prices for energy – whether at the pumps or in home energy bills. This situation stifles economic development, puts the nation's security at risk, and places an unnecessary burden on the family budget. Americans need to come to grips with the onerous policies of the past that are strangling them now; this is an American-Made problem that requires an American-Made solution.

Unfortunately, Congress has tried time and again to enact solutions to expand our energy resources only to be thwarted by a vocal minority. The opposition's only

solution is social engineering by mandating that the American people change their lifestyle. This has not worked in the past and will not work today. In response, 12 Republicans and 9 Democrats joined Congressman Nunes in introducing H.R. 5890, the American-Made Energy Freedom Act. This bipartisan bill would provide short-term relief while funding a long-term solution for energy freedom. It would accomplish this by opening just 2,000 acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to exploration and investing the federal share of the lease and royalty revenue into an energy trust fund.

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### Our Mission Statement

To ensure our constituents and all Americans live free and prosperous lives in a healthy and safe environment by serving, communicating, protecting and representing them in a professional and caring manner.

## What the Government Can Do For You

Guest Editorial by Brittany Rynsburger

When an experience overwhelmingly exceeds your expectations, you know it was worth your time and effort. That is how I feel after having completed my internship with Congressman Nunes.

The most important thing that I took from this experience is that the positive impact our government has on the lives of folks is highly underrated and often unnoticed. When one hears that their congressman can help them solve their problems with any federal agency, they probably would not think much of it. They say of course congressmen exist to represent the needs of their respective districts in Washington, D.C., but in the midst of greater issues like the War in Iraq or reducing the federal deficit, does one person's problem really matter to his or her congressman?

The only answer I can honestly give you after my time as an intern is **yes it does**. During my summer internship, I had the privilege of assisting with casework, which is the term used to describe the process where the Congressman contacts a federal agency on the behalf of a constituent to resolve an issue, and what I gained from that is more useful and rewarding than any other summer job I could've taken. The staff at Congressman Nunes' office is committed to assisting constituents with the hundreds of problems they contact them about, whether it be with immigration problems, receiving their social security checks, making sure their mail is delivered or awarding a Veteran with medals. With a little patience, most every case is solved favorably. And solving an issue that means the world to a constituent is rewarding to staff as well.

I could go on and on about the seemingly impossible things that Congressman Nunes' office has done for his constituents, but it's not just the casework. It's showing up at local events and supporting the community in endeavors that are important to them. It's showing compassion to people in the district that make this office more than just a legislative engine. With all of the negativity surrounding politics these days, I wish everyone could intern in their congressman's office. They really are here to serve the people and what better way to truly understand it than to see it personally. I am so grateful that I was able to have had this opportunity.

## Congress Passes Pension Bill

The Republican led Congress made a commitment to take proactive steps to protect and strengthen America's retirement system. This commitment meant that Congress had to take a long look at the mis-managed pension systems set up by companies that were not following through on the promises they made to employees. To reform this broken system, Congress recently enacted H.R. 4, the Pension Protection Act. The measure fixes outdated pension rules to help ensure employers properly and adequately fund their worker pension plans, provide meaningful new disclosure to workers about the status of their pension plan, protect taxpayers from a possible multi-billion dollar taxpayer bailout, and make

common sense modifications to encourage greater personal savings for retirement and other needs.

The Pension Protection Act also includes a number of provisions that encourage charitable donations. For example, folks can now make tax-free deductions from their Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) to charities, businesses can deduct the value of food donations from their taxes, and blood donation centers can now write off the fuel costs of transporting and collecting blood.

Furthermore, a bill co-sponsored by Congressman Nunes - H.R. 5424 - which would allow Mennonite church employees to receive the benefits they have

been offered for more than 40 years was successfully included in the final version of the bill.

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA), an organization affiliated with the Mennonite Church, has provided socially-conscious investment and retirement options to church employees for more than 40 years. Among the benefits is an annuity retirement benefit for church employees. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recently interpreted a 2002 law as having ended the ability of MMA to operate this type of plan. Other churches operating similar plans were permitted to continue their retirement programs as well.



Summer intern Brittany Rynsburger in the Congressman's Visalia Office.

### Quick Facts

Rep. Devin Nunes maintains two offices in the 21st Congressional District to serve the needs of his constituents. His main office is in Visalia at 113 N. Church St., Suite 208. The telephone number is 733-3861.

His Fresno County office is in Clovis at 264 Clovis Ave., Suite 206. The telephone number is 323-5528.

## USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas Dorr visits Tulare County



State Director Higgins, Rep. Nunes, Under Secretary Dorr, Western Milling Manager Tony Correia, and Chris Donati tour an ethanol plant.

In August, USDA Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas Dorr joined Rep. Nunes and a number of local officials for a tour of Tulare County to see the work that is currently being performed by USDA Rural Development.

“Whether it’s an ethanol plant or industrial park, a day care center or a critical care medical facility, investments made by USDA Rural Development are building a better future for rural residents in Tulare County and throughout the nation,” said

Under Secretary Dorr.

Mr. Dorr, along with USDA Rural Development California State Director Ben Higgins, made stops in Tulare, Woodlake, and Lindsay to look at infrastructure developments and improvements.



Supervisor Jim Maples, State Director Ben Higgins, Supervisors Connie Conway, Phil Cox, Allen Ishida and Steve Worthley, Under Secretary Thomas Dorr and Rep. Devin Nunes at a grant presentation in Tulare.

“Bringing Under Secretary Dorr out to the San Joaquin Valley gives him a perfect opportunity to see firsthand the positive work that USDA Rural Development is accomplishing,” said Rep. Nunes.

## Inspector General Releases Report on California Rural Legal Services Violations in the San Joaquin Valley

In 2005, a confidential source contacted Representative Nunes with information regarding activities being performed by California Rural Legal Services (CRLA), which is a grantee of Legal Services Corporation (LSC). The source was a former employee of the CRLA Modesto office and claimed to have evidence that they had been consistently violating federal law in many of their activities.

The Congressman immediately contacted the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and subsequently referred the source to them. The OIG immediately began an investigation that has finally



CRLA violated federal law by engaging in impact litigation related to farm workers

reached preliminary findings on a number of claims.

Specifically, the OIG was able to establish that CRLA was using federal dollars to conduct “impact litigation” based on their pet issues, rather than helping serve needy clients in the area. The OIG also found that

CRLA was “client shopping,” which also cut into their ability to help underprivileged individuals in need of legal assistance.

“CRLA has abused taxpayer dollars at the expense of poor folks in the Valley. Rather than helping people, they have squandered mil-

lions harassing business with serial litigation,” said Rep. Nunes.

The report also states that a number of charges were not able to be proven due to the fact that CRLA failed to produce documents requested by the OIG. Those complaints included working on cases for undocumented persons and engaging in lobbying activities.

He later added, “This report simply affirms what we have known for years about CRLA but were not able to prove until the confidential source came forward and I thank her for being brave enough to do so.”

## World War II Veteran Finally Receives Well Deserved Metals

Duane Wallace Turk of Fresno, was a member of the United States Navy from 1943 until 1946, serving in the South Pacific during World War II. Unfortunately, Mr. Wallace never received the medals that he earned for his bravery in combat. To rectify the situation, he contacted Congressman Nunes in hopes that he could help him obtain the medals he did not receive 60 years ago.

In July, Gerry Rodriguez, who is also from Fresno and is interning in the Congressman's Visalia office while on summer break from Columbia University, delivered the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, an Honorable Service Lapel Pin, and a Discharge Button to Mr. Turk.

"I was honored to help Mr. Wallace get the recognition that is owed to him," said Rep. Nunes.



Duane Wallace Turk and Gerry Rodriguez posing with Mr. Turk's medals.

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This trust fund would be used to pay for numerous renewable, alternative, and advanced energy programs. At \$40 billion over 30 years, this trust fund would be the largest investment in renewable, alternative, and advanced energy in our nation's history – **all at no cost to the taxpayer.**

"What is needed is a comprehensive strategy that will reduce dependence on foreign sources of oil while bridging the gap to the next generation of energy. Congress has a responsibility to deal with our nation's energy demands in a bi-partisan manner that benefits all Americans," said Rep. Nunes.

Within the first two years of enactment of H.R. 5890, numerous renewable and alternative energy programs would receive billions of dollars in much needed invest-

ment. This would include an infusion of investment into the next generation of ethanol (cellulosic), a deployment of Coal-to-Liquid technology, an expansion of the use of solar and fuel cell technology, and significant growth in the biofuel energy production industry.

Moreover, the bill funds numerous renewable energy provisions that were originally authorized in the Energy Policy Act and have yet to receive significant funding. These federal investments are needed to ensure breakthroughs in biotechnology, new feedstocks, harvesting, storage, transportation, and processing to produce a sustainable transportation fuel at a price competitive with fuel from the mature petroleum industry. Furthermore, enhancing federal consumer tax credits are necessary to ensure that every home owner or small

business has the opportunity to participate in our energy freedom by installing alternative energy systems that are economically viable and environmentally sensitive.

Indeed, the proposals put forth in H.R. 5890 will have numerous benefits. First, it will assist in meeting Renewable Portfolio Standards which have been set by many states. Second, it will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Third, it will incubate technology rather than subsidize an industry. Finally, it will bridge the gap to homegrown energy and reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Certainly, there is no quick fix to the problem, but it is clear that Americans cannot continue to afford increased energy prices. The U.S is in the midst of the Global War on Terrorism in which the certified state sponsors of

terrorism are the same radicals relied upon for its petroleum needs.

Congressman Nunes added, "We simply cannot continue to send American money to fund fanatical regimes that are determined to destroy our way of life. It is time for energy freedom, it is time for energy security, and it is time for action on an American-Made solution."

As Congress returns to Washington next year, serious debate needs to occur quickly to deal with the nation's energy crisis and the American-Made Energy Freedom Act is the perfect starting point for such discussions.

Learn more about what Rep. Devin Nunes is doing by visiting his website at [www.nunes.house.gov](http://www.nunes.house.gov)